



COMPLETE ENGLISH TENSES: FIT FOR IELTS AND TOEFL

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Unit 1 Present tenses

Simple Present

Form:

We form the present tense using the base form of the infinitive. Run, come, buy, learn.

In general, we add 'S' in the third person.

Subject	Verb	The Rest of the sentence
I / you / we / they	speak learn	/ English at home
he / she / it	speaks learns	/ English at home

The spelling for the verb in the third person differs depending on the ending of that verb:

1. For verbs that end in **-O**, **-CH**, **-SH**, **-SS**, **-X**, or **-Z** we add **-ES** in the third person.

- go – goes
- catch – catches
- wash – washes
- kiss – kisses
- fix – fixes
- buzz – buzzes

2. For verbs that end in a **consonant + Y**, we remove the **Y** and add **-IES**.

- marry – marries

- study – studies
- carry – carries
- worry – worries

NOTE: For verbs that end in a **vowel + Y**, we just add **-S**.

- play – plays
- enjoy – enjoys

Use

The simple present tense is used to describe an action that is regular, true or normal.

We use the present tense:

1. For repeated or regular actions in the present time period.

- I **take** the train to work everyday.
- The train to London **leaves** every hour.
- Prince **sleeps** eight hours every night during the week.

2. For facts.

- The President of The USA **lives** in The White House.
- A Cat **has** four legs.
- We **come** from Germany.

3. For habits.

- I **get up** early every day.
- Sunny **brushes** his teeth twice a day.
- They **travel** to Bochum every weekend.

4. For things that are always / generally true.

- It **rains** a lot in winter.
- The Queen of England **lives** in Buckingham Palace.
- They **speak** Spanish at work.

Negative Sentences in the Simple Present Tense

To make a negative sentence in English we normally use Don't or Doesn't with all verbs EXCEPT **To Be** and **Modal verbs** (can, might, should etc.).

- Affirmative: You speak French.

Negative: You **don't** speak French.

You will see that we add **don't** between the subject and the verb. We use **Don't** when the subject is **I, you, we** or **they**.

- Affirmative: He speaks German.

Negative: He **doesn't** speak German.

When the subject is **he, she** or **it**, we add **doesn't** between the subject and the verb to make a negative sentence. Notice that the letter **S** at the end of the verb in the affirmative sentence (because it is in third person) disappears in the negative sentence. We will see the reason why below.

Negative Contractions

Don't

Doesn't = Does not

Isn't = Is not

Aren't = Are not

I **don't** like meat = I **do not** like meat.

- You **don't** speak Arabic.
- John **doesn't** speak Italian.
- We **don't** have time for a rest.
- It **doesn't** move.

• Questions in the Simple Present Tense

1. With **be**, put *am/ are/ is* first

Are you Swedish?

2. With all other verbs, use *do/does*

Does it cost a lot?

3. With question words (who, what, where, how, etc.), add *do/does* to the question word

Where **does** he work? How **do** they get to work?

4. If the question word is the subject, do not use *do / does*.

Who **works** for a multinational?

5. Indirect questions can start with expressions such as,

Can i ask...?, Do you know...?, Could you tell me...?

Do you know where the report is?

Examples of Questions with Do and Does:

- **Do** you need a dictionary?
- **Does** Mary need a dictionary?
- **Do** we have a meeting now?
- **Does** it rain a lot in winter?
- **Do** they want to go to the party?
- **Does** he like pizza?

Present Continuous

Form:

Present continuous positive: am / is / are + -ing form

Kenny **is emailing** her business partner. (The action is taking place now)

Present continuous negative: am / is / are + not + -ing form

I am not singing, I am dancing

Use

1. To talk about situations happening at or around the time of speaking.

Sorry, I can't help you. **I am writing** a very important email **now**.

2. To talk about temporary situations or activities.

We're **doing** more and more work in Africa at the moment.

I usually sleep at 9:00 but today, I *am sleeping* at 11:00

Questions

1. To make questions with the present continuous, put *am / is / are* before the subject.

Are you working overtime **this week**?

How **are you getting** on?

Language tip: State verbs are not used in the present continuous, e.g. know,

believe, like, love hate, forget, notice, remember. Verbs that describe emotions and feelings, they remain in the present tense. e.g. I am knowing you I know you

She is liking me she likes me

Exercise 101

Complete the sentences with the present simple or the present continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

1. Gee usually _____ (sit) in the main office, but today he _____ (work) at home.
 2. What time _____ (you / have to) leave home to get to work?
 3. _____ (you/know) Efa? He _____ (work) in the IT department too.
 4. 'What _____ Caro _____ (do)?'
- 'I _____ (think) she _____ (be) on the phone. Maybe she _____ (make) an appointment with one of the suppliers.'
5. More and more customers _____ (buy) environmentally friendly products these days.
 6. I often _____ (have) lunch just after noon, but today we _____ (have) a very late lunch because there is so much to do.
 7. I usually _____ (start) work at 9:30. But this week I _____ (start) half an hour earlier because my colleague _____ (be) on holiday and I _____ (do) some of his work too.
 8. Look at the man over there. Why _____ (he / sit) at John's desk?
 9. How much _____ (a successful salesperson / earn) each year?
 10. Whose briefcase is this? I _____ (think) it _____ (belong) to one of our clients

Unit 2 Past tenses

Past simple

Form: verb + -ed

I **spoke** to the manager yesterday.

We **flew** to Japan *last month*.

Keywords: yesterday, last month, in 2017, three years ago.

For irregular verb forms, see the end of the book.

Use

1. to talk about past actions or events that took place in a finished time period, e.g. yesterday, last year.

She **worked** here for five years, from 1999 to 2004.

I **left** school in 2004

The concert **was** interesting.

2. To talk about finished actions or events when the speaker says, asks, or knows when something happened.

I **met** him *yesterday*.

Did they **go** to University?

Yes, they **did**. / No, they **didn't**.

Exercise 102

Complete the text with the simple past form of the verbs in the box

Graduate, not like, move . Take . Work . Get . Go . Not have .
Live . Study

I was born in dresden and I also _____¹ to school there. After school, I _____² for four years at the Technical University in Munich and _____³ in 2004. After that, I _____⁴ a job with a company called Tangelo in Erlangen where I

_____ 5 in the marketing department. I _____ 6 in Nuremberg at that time and I _____ 7 a car so I _____ 8 the train to work. Then, in 2008, I _____ 9 to a company called PTC in Ansbach. I _____ 10 PTC at first, but now I'm really happy here.'

Exercise 103

Complete the dialogue with the correct form of the past simple.

Dele: Hello, Bukky. How _____ 1 (be) the meeting? _____ 2 (you / able to) optimize the ordering process?

Bukky: No, we _____ 3 (not / have) time, unfortunately. But we _____ 4 (begin) discussing options, and the team _____ 5 (make) some good suggestions. Why _____ 6 (you / not / be) at the meeting, by the way?

Dele: Oh, I _____ 7 (not / can) make it after all, my assistant _____ 8 (have) a problem that he _____ 9 (not / can) handle by himself.

Present perfect

Form: has / have + past participle

I **have worked** here for five years.

She **has booked** the hotel.

Keywords: for, since, yet, just, never, recently, already.

Use

1. To talk about actions or events that took place in a time period that has not finished e.g. up to now, today, this year.

We've **manufactured** this product for over three years.

Anna **has worked** here for ages.

How long **have** you been here?

2. To talk about finished actions or events when the speaker does not

say, ask, or know when it happened.

We've already **discussed** this.

I **have learnt** three languages *so far*.

Present perfect positive: We **have made** excellent progress.

Present perfect negative: We **haven't made** excellent progress

Present perfect question: **Have** we **made** excellent progress?

Present perfect vs past simple

1. My colleague **has lived** in many countries. (present perfect)
She **lived** in India from *2010 to 2017* (past simple)

Have you **met** the new Head of HR? (present perfect)

- Yes, I **met** her *yesterday evening*. (past simple)

N/B The past simple refers to a specific point in the past while the present perfect does not refer to a specific point, activity or event. I **have been** to Singapore *so many times*. I **was** in Singapore **last year**.

Exercise 104

Complete the sentences using the present perfect

1. _____ (Mary / ever/ work) in HR?
2. Hillary _____ (never/ be) to Turkey, but she'd like to go.
3. She _____ (just/upload) a video onto the intranet.
4. You _____ (not /attend) a training course recently, have you?
5. _____ (we/be able to) contact Seyi yet?
6. They _____ (not/test) the prototype yet.
7. I _____ (travel) a lot in my life.
8. He _____ (have/not/confirm) the appointment yet.
9. She _____ (have/be) the CEO since december 2016.

10. Miriam _____(have/never/meet) Patrick.

Exercise 105

Choose the correct answers from the words in italics.

1. I *booked* / *have booked* the hotel yesterday.
2. *Have you ever been* / *did you ever go to india*
3. I live in London now, but I *have lived* / *lived* in Paris from 2000 to 2003.
4. *I haven't seen* / *didn't see* him recently.
5. *Last year I have changed* / *changed* jobs.
6. *Did you go* / *have you been to the meeting last week?*
7. He has worked here *since* / *for* eight years.
8. I *have been* / *went* to different countries.
9. *The new products were already launched* / *have already been launched; they were* / *have been on sale for five months now.*
10. We *had/have had* our first meeting the day before yesterday. It *went/has gone* very well.

Present perfect continuous

Form: have / has + been + -ing form

I have been waiting for him for over three hours.

Use

1. Use the present perfect continuous for activities that began in the past and are still counting, when you want to emphasize
 - the activity itself

They've been developing a new product.

- The duration of the activity into the present time.

I've been saying we should do this since the project began.

2. Use the present perfect simple to emphasize the result of an action, or the number of times it has occurred, use the present perfect continuous to emphasize the duration. Compare the following sentences.

I've been working on a report.

(action or event)

I've **chaired** the team meeting three times. (number of times)

I've **just finished** the report (end result)

I've **been sitting** in this meeting all day. (duration)

I've **been waiting** for Ronaldo all day (duration)

Present perfect continuous vs present perfect simple

- I've **been attending** training programmes for years, but this training **has changed** my life!
- We've **been reading** the newsletter since January, but **I haven't read** the most recent one yet.

Exercise 106

Choose the best verb form: Present perfect simple or present perfect continuous.

1. *A: Have you written / Have you been writing the report?*

B: Yes, but it isn't finished yet.

2. *A: How many reports have you written / have you been writing today?*

B: Three and a half, but I've nearly finished the last one now, luckily.

3. *A: Have you seen / Have you been seeing Tim?*

B: No, I haven't. Is he even in the office today?

4. *A: So, how long have you been / have you been being here this morning?*

B: For about two hours. I think the alarm *has ringed / has been ringing* all night.

5. Why have you not *switched/ been switching* it off yet.

Past Perfect

Form: had + past participle

The meeting **had ended** when he arrived.

Use

1. To say that one event happened before another completed past event.

The **meeting had ended** when **he arrived**.

First completed event Second completed event.

The sales rep **had left** the stand *by the time* I **got** there.

They **had already unpacked** the equipment *when* I **arrived**.

The past perfect often appears in sentences with conjunctions, *such as, when, by the time, because, so already*. The other verb in the sentence is always in the past simple.

Exercise 107

Complete the sentences with the past perfect form of the verbs in brackets.

1. It's been a busy day. I think I _____ (already/ read) 100 emails by nine o'clock this morning.
2. They _____ (see) our website on the internet by the time they contacted us.
3. Why _____ (his boss / not / be) in touch before today?
4. How many reports _____ (you/write) by the end of last week?
5. We _____ (try) to solve the problems many times before, so it was a relief when we finally found the problem.

Past Continuous

Form: was / were + -ing form

She applied for the job while she **was studying** at University.

Use

1. To talk about something in progress at a particular time in the past.
It often appears with the past simple in the same sentence.

We **were dancing** when Sheila **arrived**.

Note that the past action might happen whilst the continuous action is in progress or it might interrupt and stop the continuous action.

2. To give background information in the past.

We **were working** all day.

Exercise 108

Complete this interview with the past perfect or the past continuous form of the verb in brackets.

Journalist You opened your first cloth store in 2001, did your interest in fashion begin there or _____₁ (you/always/be) interested?

TuTu I _____₂ (have) a number of jobs in the hong Kong fashion industry long before I opened my own shop. And that was all the time when clothes with a Chinese look _____₃ quickly _____₄ (become) very fashionable around the world.

Although, even as a child, while I _____₅ (grow) up in America, I knew that was something I wanted to do.

Journalist so why didn't you stay in the US?

TuTu Well, my boyfriend , now my husband, was offered a job in Hong Kong, I _____₆ just _____₇ (graduate), so I was free to go anywhere.

Unit 3 Future tenses

Future simple

Will

Form: will + verb I think I **will eat** out tonight.

Use

1. To make promises / requests/ offers

I'll definitely **finish** it tomorrow.

We'll **start** the installation tomorrow as planned.

2. To talk about future facts.

Next year, the new factory **will be** in Hong Kong.

3. To make decisions at the moment of speaking.

A: Can I call for a taxi? I need to get to the airport.

B: Don't do that. I'll **drive** you there myself.

4. To talk about predictions.

The price of gold **will continue** to rise.

There **will be** more flying cars in the next five years

Going to

Form: *am / is / are* + going to + verb

I **am going to work** late today.

Use:

1. To talk about intentions or plans.

We **are going to drive** to Berlin for the holiday.

I **am going to learn** a language when I get married.

2. To talk about predictions with a present evidence.

It is cloudy! It's **going to rain**.

Watch out! You're **going to hit** your head on the door.

Exercise 109

Complete the gaps with 'will' and 'going to'

1. We _____ (have) are going to have dinner at a nice restaurant on Saturday, but we haven't booked a table yet.
2. My ski instructor believes it _____ (snow) in the mountains tomorrow evening.
3. Wait! I _____ (drive) you to the station.
4. I _____ (see) my sister in April.
5. Look at the clouds - it _____ (rain) in a few minutes.
6. Listen! There's someone at the door. I _____ (open) the door for you.

Future continuous

Form: will + be + -ing

I **will be driving** to Madrid next week.

Use

1. Activities that will be in progress at a certain time in the future.

I can't see you at 11:00 on Monday because **I'll be visiting** the factory.

2. Repeated or continuous activities over a period of time, often with the prepositions *for* and *until*

I **will be meeting** Sandra regularly until the project is completed.

(repeated many times in the future)

We'll be living in Wuppertal for 6 months.

(continuous over a period of time)

Negative

I will not be working (I won't be ..)

you will not be reading (you won't be ..)
he will not be cooking (he won't be ..)

Exercise 110

Fill in the gaps with the future continuous

- 1. This time next year I _____ (live) in Italy.
- 2. At 8PM tonight I _____ (eat) dinner with my family.
- 3. They _____ (run) for about four hours. Marathons are incredibly difficult!
- 4. Unfortunately, I _____ (work) on my essay so I won't be able to watch the match.
- 5. She _____ (study) at the library tonight.
- 6. _____ (you/wait) at the station when she arrives?
- 7. I _____ (drink) at the pub while you are taking your exam!
- 8. _____ (she/visit) her Grandmother again this week?
- 9. At 3PM I _____ (watch) that movie on channel four.
- 10. _____ (they/attend) your concert next Friday? It would be lovely to see them.

Future perfect

Form: will+have+ past participle

By this time in three years, I **will have completed** my studies.

Use

1. To talk about an action that will be completed before a point of time in the future.

A: How's the report?

B: It's going well. I'll definitely **have finished** it by Friday.

By six pm tonight:

I **will have finished** this book.

You **will have studied** the English tenses.

She **will have cooked** dinner.

By next week,

- I **will not have finished** this book
- You **will not have studied** the English tenses
- She **will not have cooked** dinner

Note the keywords: by or before

Exercises 111

Fill in the gaps with the future perfect

1. She _____ (finish) her exams by then so we

can go out for dinner.

2. They _____(arrive) for dinner before the baby wakes up.
3. Celine _____ (be) in China for three years next week.
4. By December, I _____(study) for five years.
5. _____ (he/finish) his exams when we go on holiday?
6. He _____ (not /complete) his thesis by July.

Future perfect continuous

Form: will + have + been + verb(ing)

Philo starts waiting at 9am. I am late and cannot arrive before 10am. Philo **will have been waiting** for an hour by the time I meet her.

Use

Future Continuous emphasizes interrupted actions, whereas Future Perfect Continuous emphasizes a duration of time before something in the future. Study the examples below to understand the difference.

Examples:

- *He will be tired because he **will be exercising** so hard.*

This sentence emphasizes that he will be tired

because he will be exercising at that exact moment in the future.

- *He will be tired because he **will have been exercising** so hard.*

This sentence emphasizes that he will be tired because he will have been exercising for a period of time. It is possible that he will still be exercising at that moment OR that he will just have finished.

- How long **will Ken have been working** when he retires?
- Next month I'll **have been studying** Chinese for two years.
- He **won't have been studying** long enough to qualify.
- Next week Jane is going to swim from England to France. By the time she gets to France, she'll **have been swimming** non-stop for over thirteen hours.

1: Just like with the other perfect continuous tenses we can use the future perfect continuous to say 'how long' for an action that continues up to another point in the future. The second point can be a time or another action.

- In April, she **will have been teaching** for twelve years.
- By the time you arrive, I'll **have been cooking** for hours!

In the same way as with the future perfect simple, we often use the future perfect continuous because we like easy numbers. It's also possible to use the present perfect continuous, but then we will get a more complicated number.

- I've **been working** here for 11 months and three weeks. (This is correct, but the time is not an easy number.)
- On Tuesday, I **will have been working** here for one year. (A much easier number.)

2: We can use the future perfect continuous, like the other perfect continuous tenses, to talk about something that finishes just before another time or action (in this case, in the future). It's often used because there will be a result at the second point in the future. (Again, if we use 'when' we usually need the present simple)

- When I see you, I'll **have been studying**, so I'll be tired

Exercises 112

Complete the gaps with the correct form of the future perfect continuous

1. Will _____ (she / wait) long by the time we get there?
2. I _____ (wait) here for three hours by six o'clock.

3. By 2018, I _____ (live) in London for sixteen years.
4. When I finish this course, I _____ (learn) English for twenty years.
5. Next year I _____ (work) here for four years.
6. When I come at 6:00, _____ (practice) long

ANSWER KEY

Exercise 101

1. Sits, is working 2. do you have to 3. do you know, works 4. is Caro doing, think, is, is making 5. buy 6. have, are having 7. start, am starting 8. is he sitting 9. does a successful salesperson earn 10. think, belongs

Exercise 102

1. went 2. studied 3. graduated 4. got 5. worked 6. lived 7. didn't have 8. took 9. moved 10. didn't like

Exercise 103

1. was 2. were you able to 3. did not have 4. began 5. made 6. were you not 7. could not 8. had 9. could not

Exercise 104

1.has Mary ever worked 2. has never been 3. has just uploaded 4. have not attended 5. have we been able to
6. have not tested 7 have travelled 8.has not confirmed 9. has been the 10. has never met

Exercise 105

1.booked 2. have you ever been 3. lived 4. haven't seen 5. changed 6. did you go 7. for 8. have been
9. have already been launched, have been 10. had, went

Exercise 106

1.have you written 2. have you been writing 3. have you seen 4. have you been, has been ringing 5. switched

Exercise 107

1.had already read 2. had seen 3. had his boss not been
4. had you written 5. had tried

Exercise 108

1.had you always been 2. had had 3. was 4. becoming
5. was growing 6. had 7. graduated

Exercise 109

1. are going to have 2. will snow 3. will drive 4. am going to see 5. is going to rain 6. will open

Exercise 110

1. will be living 2. will be eating 3. will be running 4. will be working 5. will be studying 6. you will be waiting 7. will be drinking 8. she will be visiting 9. will be watching 10. will they be attending

Exercise 111

1. she will have finished 2. will have arrived 3. will have been 4. will have studied 5. will he have finished 6. will not have completed

Exercise 112

1. she have been waiting 2. will have been waiting 3. will have been living 4. will have been learning 5. will have been working 6. I will have been practicing

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